

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 INR-10 NSAE-00 PM-05
PER-01 ACDA-12 CPR-02 SY-05 L-03 DODE-00 /071 W
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FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3299
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINS, UR, US, OTRA, CSCE
SUBJECT: EMBASSY TRAVEL - MAY 1978

REF: (A) MOSCOW 10419, (B) MOSCOW A-130

SUMMARY: DURING MONTH OF MAY EMBASSY TRAVELERS WERE
ABLE TO VISIT FOR FIRST TIME NEWLY-OPENED AREAS OF
NIZHNEANGARSK, VOLZHSKIY AND KASHIRA, CONTINUING
SUCCESES OF PREVIOUS MONTH (REF A). HOWEVER, SOVIETS
ALSO REFUSED OR OBSTRUCTED SEVERAL OTHER TRIPS,
OFTEN ON VERY SHAKY GROUNDS, AND MFA AND UPDK
INSTITUTED NEW TRAVEL NOTE AND RESERVATIONS
RESTRICTIONS. END SUMMARY.

1. TRAVEL STATISTICS FOR MAY ARE AS FOLLOWS:

REQUESTS: 53
DESTINATIONS: 87
TRAVELERS: 110
SELF-CANCELLED: 2
REFUSED/ALTERED: 3
EXCEPTIONS GRANTED: 4 (TWO 24 HR, TWO 48 HR)

2. NEWLY-OPENED AREAS: ON MAY 18 EMBOFF SONTAG AND
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FAMILY SUCCEEDED IN TRAVELING TO NEWLY-OPENED CITY
OF KASHIRA (REF B). DURING MAY 21-28 TRIP TO
CAUCASUS EMBOFF MCNAMARA AND WIFE VISITED
VOLZHSKIY, AND MAY 30-JUNE 1 EMBOFFS TOMSEN AND
SCHUMAKER VISITED NIZHNEANGARSK (AIRGRAMS ON THESE
TRIPS ARE IN PREPARATION).

3. TRAVEL REFUSAL: ON MAY 6 MFA PROTOCOL OFFICER VACHNADZE INFORMED TRAVEL OFFICER THAT REQUEST BY TDY EMPLOYEE KAY OLIVER TO TRAVEL TO TALLINN AND VILNIUS MAY 9-13 WAS DENIED BECAUSE OLIVER HAD COMMITTEED "VIOLATION OF SOVIET TRAVEL RULES." VACHNADZE ALSO ADVISED THAT TRAVEL REFUSAL DID NOT EXTEND TO OLIVER'S TRAVELING COMPANION, SHIRLY BENSON, WIFE OF P&C COUNSELOR. TRAVEL OFFICER ASKED VACHNADZE FOR DETAILS OF ALLEGED TRAVEL RULES VIOLATION, BUT VACHNADZE COULD NOT PROVIDE ANY. SUBSEQUENTLY, BENSON DECIDED TO CANCEL HER TRIP. OLIVER FILED FOR LENINGRAD TO TEST WHETHER BAN ON HER TRAVEL WAS PERMANENT, AND MFA REGISTERED TRIP. OLIVER DEPARTED COUNTRY ON MAY 15.

4. SUBSEQUENT TO OLIVER TURNDOWN, CONSULAR COUNSELOR GROSS WAS CALLED INTO OVIR TO RECEIVE ORAL PROTEST ON ACTIVITIES OF OLIVER AND HUSBAND JOHN MILLER IN ODESSA ON APRIL 17. OVIR ALLEGED THAT OLIVER AND MILLER TOOK "UNAUTHORIZED" PHOTOGRAPHS OF MARKET SCENE, EXPOSED FILM WHEN ASKED TO TURN OVER CAMERAS TO DRUZHINIKI, AND POSED AS TOURISTS RATHER THAN DIPLOMATS. OLIVER CONFIRMS THAT SHE AND MILLER WERE STOPPED BY DRUZHINIKI WHILE TAKING PHOTOS. OLIVER ALSO SAID THAT LANGUAGE PROBLEMS LED TO EXPOSURE OF FILM, AND THAT AT NO TIME DID LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SHE OR HER HUSBAND SEEK TO CONCEAL DIPLOMATIC STATUS. MFA LATER CONFIRMED IN EXCHANGE OF DIPLOMATIC NOTES THAT IT WAS THIS INCIDENT WHICH LED TO BAN ON OLIVER'S TRAVEL TO TALLINN AND VILNIUS, THOUGH EMBASSY IS AT A LOSS TO EXPLAIN HOW THESE EVENTS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH ANY CONCEIVABLE VIOLATION OF TRAVEL RULES.

5. TRAVEL REFUSAL: ON MAY 16 VACHNADZE INFORMED TRAVEL OFFICER THAT MFA HAD REFUSED CLOSED AREA EXCEPTION REQUEST OF FIRST SECRETARY HUGH HAMILTON TO VISIT PROTVINO, A SMALL SETTLEMENT IN MOSCOW OBLAST.

6. TRAVEL REFUSAL: ON MAY 23, MFA PROTOCOL OFFICER VASILYEV INFORMED TRAVEL OFFICER THAT REQUEST BY TRAVEL OFFICER AND FIRST SECRETARY PETER TOMSEN TO VISIT KYZYL AND KRASNOYARSKI (MAY 25-27) WAS REFUSED BECAUSE BOTH CITIES WERE CLOSED. TRAVEL OFFICER EXPLAINED THAT KYZYL, CAPITAL OF TUVINSKAYA ASSR, WAS AN OPEN CITY AND THAT STOP IN KRASNOYARSK, A CLOSED CITY, WAS JUST TO CHANGE PLANES FOR ONWARD TRAVEL TO ULAN UDE. VASILYEV, HOWEVER,

STUCK TO HIS STORY. EMBOFFS COMPLETED LATTER LEGS
OF TRIP (ULAN UDE-NIZHNEANGARSK-KHABAROVSK) WITH NO
PROBLEMS.

7. COMMENT: VASILYEV DOES NOT NORMALLY DO TRAVEL
WORK AND WAS PROBABLY ASKED TO DELIVER MESSAGE SO
VACHNADZE WOULD NOT HAVE TO. IN PROCESS,
VASILYEV UNDOUBTEDLY PASSED GARBLED MESSAGE, AND
TRAVEL OFFICER SUSPECTS THAT IF VACHNADZE HAD
SUMMONED UP NECESSARY COURAGE TO COME TO PHONE HE
WOULD HAVE DENIED CLOSED AREA EXCEPTION REQUEST

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FOR KRASNOYARSK AND NOT REGISTERED KYZYL PORTION
OF TRIP FOR "REASONS OF A TEMPORARY NATURE." END
COMMENT.

8. TRIP CANCELLATION: ON MAY 12, USCO DIRECTOR
ROBERT FARRAND SENT LETTER TO B.V. NOVIKOV, CHIEF
OF FOREIGN RELATIONS DEPARTMENT IN MINISTRY OF
AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY. LETTER EXPRESSED
INTENTION OF FIRST SECRETARIES FARRAND AND TORRE
TO TRAVEL TO KAMA RIVER TRUCK PLANT AT NABEREZHNIYE
CHELNIY MAY 21-23, AND REQUESTED THAT MINISTRY FACILI-
TATE TOUR OF PLANT AND INSTALLATIONS SUPPLIED BY
AMERICAN COMPANIES. DESPITE REPEATED ATTEMPTS,
NOVIKOV WOULD NOT DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH FARRAND
OR TORRE, AND HIS DEPUTY ZHUCHKOV CLAIMED
NEVER TO HAVE RECEIVED THE MAY 12 LETTER AND MAY 18
FOLLOW-UP LETTER. FACED WITH THIS STONEWALLING,
FARRAND AND TORRE WERE FORCED TO CANCEL TRIP. WE
NOTE THAT THIS PLANNED TRIP TO AN OPEN INDUSTRIAL

AREA BY TWO COMMERCIAL OFFICERS FOR THE PURPOSE OF
TOURING A TRUCK PLANT SUPPLIED IN LARGE PART BY
U.S. FIRMS AND MEETING WITH U.S. SPECIALISTS ON-
SITE SHOULD HAVE MET WITH NO DIFFICULTIES.

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9. NEW TRAVEL REQUIREMENTS: ON MAY 10 VACHNADZE
INFORMED TRAVEL OFFICER THAT MFA WAS TIGHTENING
UP PROCEDURES ON FILING TRAVEL NOTES AND WOULD
STRICTLY ENFORCE GROUND RULES ON WHO IS ALLOWED TO
FILE FOR TRAVEL. HENCEFORTH, VACHNADZE SAID, ONLY
PERSONS REGISTERED WITH MFA MAY FILE NOTES WITH
MFA FOR TRAVEL OUTSIDE MOSCOW OBLAST'. THOSE
PERSONS REGISTERED AT OVIR MUST APPLY TO OVIR FOR
VISA TO TRAVEL TO AREAS OUTSIDE OBLAST'. THE
FOLLOWING PERSONS ARE REGISTERED WITH OVIR:

--GUESTS OF EMBASSY (WITHOUT DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS)
--PERSONAL GUESTS (WITHOUT DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS)
--THIRD-COUNTRY NANNIES
--CATHOLIC PRIEST AND PROTESTANT CHAPLAIN, AND
FAMILIES . .

AS BEFORE, EMBASSY PERSONNEL, TDY PERSONNEL, GUEST OF
AMBASSADOR, CLOSE RELATIVES OF EMBASSY AND TDY
PERSONNEL (PARENTS, SIBLINGS, CHILDREN, SPOUSE), ANGLO-
AMERICAN SCHOOL TEACHERS AND FAMILIES, AND PERSONS
WITH DIPLOMATIC PASSPORTS ARE REGISTERED AT MFA
AND CAN CONTINUE TO FILE TRAVEL NOTES AS BEFORE.

10. COMMENT: THIS STRICT INTERPRETATION OF FILING
REQUIREMENTS WORKS A SIGNIFICANT HARDSHIP ON
PERSONNEL AFFECTED, SINCE VISA REQUESTS TO OVIR
INVOLVE MUCH MORE PAPERWORK AND CAN OFTEN REQUIRE
DAYS TO COMPLETE. IN ADDITION, TRAVELER CANNOT
AUTOMATICALLY ASSUME THAT PERMISSION IS GRANTED TO
TRAVEL UNLESS OTHERWISE ADVISED. BECAUSE OF THIS,
MFA HAD PREVIOUSLY ALLOWED FILING OF NOTE BY EMBASSY-
RELATED PERSONS NOT REGISTERED AT MFA, BUT THIS
LIBERAL APPROACH HAS NOW BEEN HALTED. EMBASSY HAS
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PUBLISHED ADMIN NOTICE ADVISING AFFECTED PERSONNEL
OF NEW FILING REQUIREMENTS. END COMMENT.

11. FSL RESERVATIONS: UPDK HAS NOTIFIED EMBASSY

THAT IT WILL NO LONGER MAKE RESERVATIONS IN MOSCOW
FOR SOVIET EMPLOYEES OF CONGEN LENINGRAD OR KAP
WHO PERIODICALLY COME TO MOSCOW FOR CONSULTATION.
THIS REPRESENTS NEW MINOR INCONVENIENCE SINCE IT
REQUIRES SOMEONE TO STAND IN LONG LINES AT CENTRAL
HALF-DOZEN TIMES PER YEAR THAT WE HAVE SOVIET
PERSONNEL ON TDY HERE.

12. CLOSED FLIGHTS REVISITED: TRAVEL OFFICER
REPORTED REF A ON UPDK'S REFUSAL TO RESERVE SEATS
ON CERTAIN FLIGHTS TO ALMA-ATA FOR DAO HALLORAN.
AT THAT TIME, TRAVEL OFFICER STATED THAT TO HIS
KNOWLEDGE OTHER EMBASSY TRAVELERS HAVE NOT
ENCOUNTERED SUCH PROBLEMS IN RECENT YEARS. SINCE
THEN, TRAVEL OFFICER HAS RECEIVED NUMEROUS REPORTS
THAT OTHER EMBASSY TRAVELERS HAVE INDEED BEEN
DENIED SEATS ON SPECIFIC FLIGHTS, ESPECIALLY TU-144
RUN

13. EMBASSY REQUESTS APPROPRIATE
WASHINGTON RETALIATION. MATLOCK

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